

THEA 1440: Play Analysis

Interpret | Analyze | Critique

Fall 2026

Asynchronous

Instructor: Zoe Settle

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Office Hours:

Virtual, by appointment only. When reaching out to schedule a meeting, please include 2-3 dates and times you are available.

Course Description

Principles and techniques governing the preparation of plays and other theatrical events for performance, design, direction and production. Students will explore contemporary systems of script analysis with an emphasis on theory and criticism of theatre arts.

Course Structure

The class is delivered fully online. There will be no synchronous meetings required in order to pass this class. The course will contain 4 units, each of which will ask you to read a classic play, watch a production, then read a modern derivative. Included in each unit will be material to help contextualize the works you are reading, the playwrights themselves, and their place in American Theater. There will be weekly discussion posts to expand your thoughts on the work you're reading, with a reflective analysis due at the end of each unit. There will be a final project where you will synthesize what you've learned this semester.

Learning Outcomes

The ultimate objective of this course is to equip you with skills to critique and analyze theatrical works, while also beginning to curate your own personal taste. I have chosen a variety of plays from the theater canon, both old and new, and am hopeful this small sampling will encourage you to continue reading and exploring after the class has concluded.

Upon completion of this course, students should feel comfortable:

- Analyzing the social, historical, and cultural context of a play
- Exploring a play's themes and how they resonate with contemporary issues.
- Critiquing a performance's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the text.
- Articulating personal reactions to a play and its performance.
- Using critical thinking skills to evaluate the play's artistic merit and social impact.

Reading Materials:

- *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller - [Online PDF](#)
- *John Proctor is the Villain* by Kimberly Belflower - [Online on CliffNotes](#)
- *Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry - [Online PDF](#)
- *Clybourne Park* by Bruce Norris - on Canvas
- *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen - [Online PDF](#)
- *A Doll's House Part II* by Lucas Hnath - on Canvas
- *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare - [Folger Online](#)
- *macbitches* by Sophie McIntosh - on Canvas

Productions:

The Crucible:

<https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.libproxy.library.unt.edu/content/productions/the-crucible-digital-theatre?currentSeries=the-crucible-unit-of-study#about>

A Raisin in the Sun:

<https://youtu.be/cEmwWMgtwWA?si=OHZHZnj1FdAksYIG>

Extended resources:

<https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.libproxy.library.unt.edu/search?q=a+raisin+in+the+sun>

A Doll's House:

<https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.libproxy.library.unt.edu/content/productions/a-dolls-house-digital-theatre>

Macbeth:

<https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.libproxy.library.unt.edu/content/productions/macbeth-rs-sc#about>

How to Succeed in this Course

Even though this class is fully online, your **weekly** engagement is necessary to be successful. This class requires critical thinking, daily reading and writing, and interactions with your peers. Participating in an online course can be challenging, and I strongly urge you to keep an eye on deadlines for each module so that you can pace yourself accordingly.

While this is not an English or writing course, it is expected that your written responses will contain appropriate spelling and grammar. Please make a habit of double checking your work for legibility. I want to hear your own opinions and impressions of the play. Any information you use from another source, such as a previous course or your own reading, *must be cited*.

Communication

Generally, I am quick to respond to emails. However, I do not look at my email on evenings or weekends. If you email during these times, I will make best efforts to reply on the next business day. I also ask that you give me at least 24 hours to answer your email prior to sending me a follow-up.

Some things to be mindful of when emailing your professors:

- To make sure that your message gets seen in a timely manner, please use my UNT email, *not* Canvas messages
- If you have an extenuating circumstance preventing you from attending class or submitting assignments on time, please reach out to the [Dean of Students](#) for support. They are here to advocate on your behalf.
- Use your resources: Make sure the answer to your question is not already on Canvas or in the syllabus. Read assignments carefully, consult a classmate, and Google your question if necessary. Then, if you still have a question, email me.
- If it is within 24 hours of a due date, please do not count on getting a reply from me in time.
- I am not tech support. If you are having problems accessing Canvas or elements in the course, please try the following before contacting me:
 - [General Canvas Help Guides \(Searchable\)](#)
 - [UNT Tech Support \(FAQ, Phone Number, and Chat\)](#)
 - Submit a Helpdesk Ticket:
https://unts.servicenowservices.com/unt?id=sc_cat_item&sys_id=bb9a0fd91b02f090b611f47b04bcbde

ADA Accommodations

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation.

Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](http://www.unt.edu/oda) website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Please contact me at the start of the semester to discuss your accommodation letter so that we are on the same page about how you will engage with the course.

Student Obligation to Academic and Production Work

Dance & Theater students are expected to budget and organize their time in order to meet both their academic and production commitments satisfactorily and on time. Production assignments, including tech week, are *not an acceptable excuse for missing class or failing to turn in assignments*.

Class Conduct

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be referred to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

View [UNT's Code of Student Conduct](#) to learn more.

Academic Integrity

UNT Honor Code: *"I commit myself to honor, integrity, and responsibility as a student representing the University of North Texas community. I understand and pledge to uphold academic integrity as set forth by UNT Student Academic Integrity Policy, 06.003. I affirm that the work I submit will always be my own, and the support I provide and receive will always be honorable."*

See UNT Policy [06.003, Student Academic Integrity](#)

Academic integrity emanates from a culture that embraces the core values of trust and honesty necessary for full learning to occur. As a student-centered public research university, the University of North Texas promotes the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, the submission of AI-generated work is not accepted in this course. *Any violation of this will result in a full loss of points for the assignment.*

When considering whether to use AI tools in your studies, please consider these guiding principles laid out by the university:

- **Be Transparent** - Clearly disclose when AI tools are used to generate content, make decisions, or assist in communication.
- **Ensure Accountability** - Take full responsibility for any AI-assisted work; do not blame the tool for errors or harmful outcomes.
- **Fact-Check AI Outputs** - Always verify the accuracy and reliability of information produced by AI, especially in research, education, and public communication.
- **Maintain Academic and Professional Integrity** - Do not use AI to cheat, plagiarize, or misrepresent knowledge or work. Follow institutional policies on AI use.
- **Credit and Cite Appropriately** - Acknowledge use of AI tools when relevant, and cite sources if AI outputs include or are based on third-party content.
- **Hallucinations and Fabricated Information** - Generative AI tools may produce content that sounds plausible but is factually incorrect or entirely made up.
- **Lack of True Understanding** - AI tools do not comprehend meaning or context the way humans do—it predicts text based on patterns in data.
- **Bias in Outputs** - AI can reflect or amplify social, cultural, or data-based biases present in its training data.

See UNT [AI policy and FAQs](#)

Sexual Assault Prevention: UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648.

Sensitive Subject Matter: In this course sensitive subject matters may be discussed. Everyone is expected to treat these moments with the sensitivity and respect they deserve. Racist, misogynistic, homophobic, or any other form of hateful language is disruptive and will not be tolerated.

All discussions should be civil and courteous. Disagreement and debate is welcome; however, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming online environment. Anyone who finds it difficult to act respectfully toward their classmates and the subject matter may be asked to leave the class.

Student Perceptions of Teaching: Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

Late Work Policy

As a general rule, there is no late work accepted in this course. Part of being a college student is learning to manage a busy schedule and various deadlines, as well as being accountable for your courseload. Work, rehearsal, tech week, or vacation are not acceptable excuses for submitting late assignments. **Please do not email me asking for late work to be graded;** Canvas is set up to automatically assign zero points to any assignment that is missing at the time the work is due, and that grade is final.

In **extremely rare** cases, extensions will be granted for extenuating circumstances. Any request for a due date extension *must be made 12 hours before the deadline* to be considered. Any extension request received within 12 hours or later of a deadline will not be acknowledged.

If you are using your ODA accommodation for occasional extensions of due dates on an eligible assignment, please provide notice of your intention to apply the accommodation at least 12 hours before the assignment deadline. If you have questions about how to use this accommodation in this course or which assignments are eligible, please refer to the course plan on file with ODA or reach out to me via email.

Grading

All written work will be submitted on specified due dates. Written work must be typed, double spaced, and left-justified, using 12 point font in either Times New Roman or Arial. I do not accept hand-written work. AI-generated work, in whole or in part, will receive a 0.

Assignment	Points
Discussions & Class Into Assignments	11 @ 5 points each
Unit Analysis	4 @ 10 points each
Final Project Assignments	55 points
Total	150 points

Final grade breakdown for points earned:

A: 135 – 150 points

B: 120 – 134 points

C: 105 – 119 points

D: 90 – 104 points

F: Below 90 points

Course Schedule

Below is an outline for the scope of the course. As a general rule, all assignments due by the posted day at 11:59pm, and your required replies for discussion posts are due by the close of the unit.

Absolutely no late work is accepted.

Intro: due August 23rd

Unit 1: The Crucible | August 24th - September 13th

- August 30th: Crucible Discussion Board
- September 6th: Proctor & Proctor Discussion Board
- September 13th: Unit 1 Analysis

Unit 2: Raisin in the Sun | September 14th - October 4th

- September 20th: Raisin Discussion Board
- September 27th: Clybourne Park Discussion Board
- October 4th: Unit 2 Analysis

Unit 3: A Doll's House | October 5th - 25th

- October 11th: Doll's House Discussion Board
- October 18th: Part 1 vs Part 2 Discussion Board
- October 25th: Unit 3 Analysis

Unit 4: Macbeth | October 26th - November 15th

- November 1st: The Scottish Play Discussion Board, Podcast Topic
- November 8th: macbitches Discussion Board
- November 15th: Unit 4 Analysis

Final Project | November 16th - December 9th

- November 22nd: Podcast topic
- November 29th: Script Rough Draft
- December 6th: Annotated Bibliography

Final Podcast due: December 9th @ 11:59pm

*This schedule is subject to minor changes.